

TURNPIKE AUTHORITY ANNOUNCES PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE "D" FOR MONROE PARKWAY

RALEIGH — The North Carolina Turnpike Authority has confirmed Alternative D as the Preferred Alternative for the proposed Monroe Parkway. In March 2009, Alternative D was identified as the Recommended Alternative in the project's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Based on public comments on the Draft EIS and in coordination with environmental regulatory and resource agencies, Alternative D has now been identified as the Preferred Alternative. New project maps reflecting the Preferred Alternative are now online.

Preferred Alternative D has the least direct impacts to natural resources in the project area, avoids impacts to Stallings Elementary School, and minimizes impacts to residential areas. The Turnpike Authority will now complete additional field studies and refine the design and construction guidelines for Alternative D. The results of this work will be documented in a Final EIS, anticipated for release in spring 2010. Final federal approval of the route will follow in summer 2010 when the Federal Highway Administration is expected to sign the Record of Decision.

The section known as Segment 2 includes the reconstruction of approximately one mile of existing US 74 to include tolled expressway lanes, as well as non-tolled frontage roads on either side of the expressway lanes that will serve local traffic. In order to minimize impacts to businesses along existing US 74, the current design for Segment 2 includes elevating US 74. This design concept reduces the footprint of the project and has reduced the business impacts by nearly half compared to other design concepts previously considered.

The other sections of Alternative D would be constructed on new location. These portions of the project depart from US 74 between Stallings Road and Indian Trail-Fairview Road, continue north near the Old Hickory Business Park, and then continue east, north of and parallel to Secrest Shortcut Road, with interchanges at Indian Trail-Fairview Road, Unionville-Indian Trail Road, Rocky River Road, US 601, NC 200, Austin Chaney Road, and Forest Hills School Road. The project would tie back into US 74 west of Marshville.

The proposed Monroe Parkway is a four-lane, controlled-access, toll road approximately 20 miles long and is expected to save travelers about 30 minutes a trip. Estimated to cost between \$695 and \$860 million, the project will be financed using toll revenue bonds, a federal transportation TIFIA loan and state supported annual gap funds. The Turnpike Authority anticipates selling bonds and awarding construction contracts in 2010. The project is scheduled to open to traffic in late 2013.

For more information on the project log onto www.ncturnpike.org/projects/monroe/

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